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TO: SAINT, WASHINGTON
FROM: SAINT, LONDON
SUBJECT: Transmittal of Interrogation Report

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SUBJECT OF REPORT: Interrogation Report on Meeting between WIRTING and SCHELLENBERG end of April 1945

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HEADQUARTERS
THIRD UNITED STATES ARMY
INTELLIGENCE CENTER
INTERROGATION SECTION
APC 403

25 July 1945

SUBJECT : Meeting between WIRSING and SCHLEMMERG end of April 1945 -

TO : 12th Army Group.

1) Contacts with SCHLEMMERG (First Version)

WIRSING persistently claimed to have seen SCHLEMMERG for the last time when taking leave on 26 March 1945.

He reportedly stated to have taken up residence in HEILBRUNN via DAD TOLZ (LAUERTA) and to have stayed there until the day of his capture, denying by implication that he had taken trips of any kind.

His subsequent contacts with SCHLEMMERG, he claimed, could be summed up in a report he wrote on President TRUMAN. Aside from that one report, he claimed, he had not taken any active part in political activities.

2) Contacts with SCHLEMMERG (Corrected Version)

When confronted with direct evidence, taken from SANDBERGER's interrogation, WIRSING finally conceded to have seen SCHLEMMERG once more, end of April 1945, in LUDWIGSHafen. He explained his reluctance that a casual reader of interrogator's report might derive the erroneous impression that he was a man of consequence in the RSHA.

3) WIRSING's Alibi

In his interrogation WIRSING has consistently tried to play down his importance. WIRSING also believes that the handle to his name -- SS Sturmbannfuehrer - is liable to lead an inexperienced interrogator astray, inasmuch as it tends to overshadow his true merits, viz to have disapproved of the Nazi concept of a 'New Order' in Europe and to have gauged Germany's pliant correctly at a very early stage of the war.

4) IMMEDIATE

WIRSING left BERLIN on 1 April 1945 heading South. After a short stay at Burg LAJENSTEIN, one of the hide-outs of Ant VI, he proceeded to TEGERNSEE (LAUERTA), where he had been assigned a billet by SANDBERGER and, finding the place overcrowded with refugees, went on to HEILBRUNN via DAD TOLZ where he put up in a private residence, retained by PATFGEN for the key personnel of VI D.

5) CALL TO LUDECK

End of April SCHLEMMERG wired for WIRSING to look him up at the earliest possible moment. The message was conveyed to WIRSING at DAD TOLZ by SANDBERGER who did not have the telegram on him and who could only offer conjectures as to WIRSING's mission.

WIRSING immediately offered strenuous objections. He told SANDBERGER that he had been out of touch with current developments for the last four weeks and that he did not feel qualified to tender any responsible advice.

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6) PROMBLE MISSION

SANDERGER told WIRSING that he assumed his call to LUBECK had nothing to do with a general report on the political situation and more likely was connected with the negotiations HITLER had initiated. SCHELENBERG probably wanted WIRSING to participate in some form in those negotiations.

7) WIRSING GIVES IN

WIRSING again raised objections, telling SANDERGER that he did not feel competent in the matter. SANDERGER, in turn, urged him to sink all objections inasmuch as SCHELENBERG probably knew what he was doing. In deference to SANDERGER's entreaties, WIRSING finally consented to taking the trip.

8) SANDERGER'S AIDE-MMOIRE ON Amt VI REFORMS

In the course of their conversation SANDERGER produced a typewritten aide-memoire, covering one page and sub-divided into paragraphs, which outlined certain reforms to be undertaken on KALTENBRUNNER's orders.

WIRSING claims not to recollect the exact contents of the aide-memoire and who had signed it. The gist of it was that responsibilities were divided up between LUBECK and SHORZENY, with GOTTSCH having been assigned to some sort of liaison job.

SANDERGER asked WIRSING to take the paper along with him to LUBECK and to show it to SCHELENBERG.

9) WIRSING ON ILLUSORY CHARACTER OF REORGANIZATION

WIRSING told SANDERGER that he considered any basic reorganisation of Amt VI as out of keeping with the stark reality of Germany's impending military defeat. For this reason he did not pay any particular attention to detail. He noticed however and immediately commented upon the fact that the aide-memoire made no mention of SCHELENBERG.

10) SANDERGER COMMENTS ON REORGANIZATION

SANDERGER concurred with WIRSING to the extent of admitting that the reforms amounted to a virtual dissolution of Amt VI.

He emphasized that the solution arrived at was fraught with dangerous implications.

11) SANDERGER ON LUBECK AND SHORZENY

LUBECK was altogether unsuited for the job, SANDERGER stated.

The choice of SHORZENY he described as grotesque. SHORZENY had neither the military background nor the experience in intelligence work necessary for the job.

12) SANDERGER ON AMBIGUITY OF ORDER

SANDERGER pointed out that the aide-memoire had left one very important question unanswered:

Was the order to apply to the whole of Germany, or was it confined to the South of Germany which by virtue of the power of attorney given by HIMMLER had come under KALTENBRUNNER's jurisdiction?

13) SCHELENBERG'S EXCLUSION

SANDERGER pointed out that the reorganisation as outlined in the aide-memoire could be taken as a dismissal of SCHELENBERG by implication.

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WIRSING asked SANDERGER whether one could construe the reorganization as forming the basis for plans entertained by KALTENBRUNNER to continue resistance in the rubble area and also as a disavowal of SCHELBELDING's attempts at reaching a negotiated surrender to the Western Allies through Count DERNAUDOTTE as intermediaries.

SANDERGER conceded that this was a possible interpretation.

14) REASONS FOR SCHELBELDING'S DIPLOMATIC

SAUERMUTH told WIRSING that VONNECK did not mention the name SCHELBELDING until SANDERGER asked him point blank. VONNECK passed the matter off in a dilatory fashion and SANDERGER did not see any sense in pressing the issue.

WIRTSCHAFER surmised that from his conversation with VONNECK he carried away the strong impression of having been witness to a "Milliputzen rebellion" resulting in SCHELBELDING's capture.

15) WIRTSCHAFER TAKES OFF

SANDERGER made a last appeal to WIRSING's sense of responsibility. He argued that VONNECK had every reason to believe SCHELBELDING would have nobody by his side in case surrender negotiations should begin in earnest, unless WIRSING joined him. WIRSING left by plane from BAD SIBLING air-strip the same day (April 30).

16) MEETING WITH SCHELBELDING

Upon his arrival at LUECK on the evening of 30 April WIRSING learned that SCHELBELDING had left for HAMBURG.

WIRSING then traveled by plane to FLINNSBURG where he met SCHELBELDING just back from GOTTSCHEWITZ.

The conference between WIRSING and SCHELBELDING took place in the latter's private apartment over several hours.

17) FAILURE OF ...

SCHELBELDING accounted for telling WIRSING that his trip to LUECK had been superseded by events.

In the face of COUNT DERNAUDOTTE's categorical refusal not to entertain any offer of surrender conditional to the Western Allies, negotiations with Count DERNAUDOTTE had irreversibly broken down.

18) SCHELBELDING ON DERNAUDOTTE NEGOTIATIONS

SCHELBELDING talked at some length about his negotiations with DERNAUDOTTE. No new developments had come to the fore. In this connection SCHELBELDING characterized HERLICH as the prototype of a man who can never take the right decision at the right moment.

19) WIRSING ON DERNAUDOTTE NEGOTIATIONS

From listening to SCHELBELDING's account WIRSING derived the impression that he had failed to see those contacts in their right perspective, viz against the backdrop of Germany's inevitable military defeat. Otherwise, WIRSING believes, SCHELBELDING would have not followed up this particular task with such fanatical zeal (Verbissenheit).

20) SCHELBELDING ON AMT VI REORGANIZATION

SCHELBELDING read the aide-memoire, the gist of which was apparently known to him and passed it off with a shrug of the shoulders.

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Commenting upon his '(implied) dismissal as chief of Amt VI he only said 'At five minutes to twelve they take time out for a thing like that'

He made no derogatory remarks about KALTENBRUNNER and took the matter with perfect equanimity. This, in VERSING's opinion, proves his estimate of SCHELENDERG as a man of stature to be correct.

21) SCHELENDERG ON TAELICK

TAELICK, SCHELENDERG stated, was not exceptionally gifted for intelligence work and had been put in charge of VI B only at the request of KALTENBRUNNER. He doubted that TAELICK was a man with much vision.

22) SCHELENDERG ON SCHMIDT

About SCHMIDT, SCHELENDERG spoke with a great deal of acerbity.

His appointment to take charge of the military sector was merely the culmination of an intention of long standing. SCHMIDT was the type of a mercenary (Landstreicher) who would probably cause a great deal of mischief while the German people would have to foot the bill.

23) VERSING FRAMED IN ARRESTED MISCHIEF, SCHELENDERG CONCURS

When DR. J.G. expressed his indignation at the 'nihilistic' Werewolf propaganda in German broadcasts, SCHELENDERG hastened to reply that he had endeavored to stop this nihilistic practice. He added that he considered the incitement of children a lowly act of crime.

To VERSING's great astonishment SCHELENDERG averred that HESSLER too was opposed to the Werewolf propaganda. Obergruppenfuehrer FRUTZKUHN had been attached to HESSLER's staff upon HITLER's specific orders.

24) SCHELENDERG ARGUES FURTHER ACTION

When VERSING stated that this explanation was not in accord with the facts - only a few days ago the MUNICH station had broadcast a Werewolf proclamation - SCHELENDERG appeared impressed and promised to bring up the matter again. He added however: There are strong indications that HESSLER was unable to assert himself against GOEBBELS.

25) KREISLER'S PRE-OCCUPATION WITH DERMOTTE CONTACTS

VERSING gained the impression that SCHELENDERG, even at this late hour, concentrated all his energies upon creating domestic conditions conducive to resuming contact with the Western Allies.

HESSLER, SCHELENDERG complained, had failed to live up to his promises and no assistance from that corner would be forthcoming.

26) SCHELENDERG ON KALTENBRUNNER

When asked to comment on KALTENBRUNNER's role, SCHELENDERG stated:

KALTENBRUNNER is cooking his own broth in Austria.

I would not be the least bit surprised if his connections with the Austrian underground movement enter into the game. In the end KALTENBRUNNER is bound to get caught in the very trap he was baited so carefully for his opposite number.

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27) WIRSING'S COMMENT ON POLITICAL DIFFERENCES BETWEEN KALTENBRUNNER AND SCHELLENBERG.

KALTENBRUNNER and SCHELLENBERG never saw eye to eye in matters of political strategy.

Around Christmas time 1944 WIRSING had a talk with KALTENBRUNNER in the Japanese Embassy during a dinner party of Ambassador OGAWA. WIRSING tried to press his main argument home (see special report on ECKMANN Lageberichte), viz that a cleavage among the Allies would be a windfall, to base Germany's foreign policy on the expectation of such. It occurred a fatal error.

KALTENBRUNNER suggested to WIRSING to have another long talk on the political situation. WIRSING mentioned this to SCHELLENBERG and asked for his advice what topics to touch upon. SCHELLENBERG's answer was:

"Try to make KALTENBRUNNER realize that matters of world policy are not synonymous with South-Eastern policy and that the decisive questions of Germany's foreign policy cannot be decided from a vantage point in Europe's backyard."

28) WHAT NOW?

Before winding up their conversation, SCHELLENBERG asked WIRSING: "What Now?"

WIRSING's answer: All you can try to do now is pick up where we left off in February/March 1945 (see special report on ECKMANN Lageberichte), viz to disband the SS and the Gestapo and to create all the necessary conditions for a transition period in which BRUNING could play his part.

29) SCHELLENBERG TRUSTS ALL RESTRAINT

WIRSING was struck by the candor with which SCHELLENBERG discussed all the topics brought up during their conversation.

In his thoughts about VI was evidently a thin; of the past that had been written off or at least been relegated to a matter of secondary importance.

30) SCHELLENBERG ON GERMAN ATROCITIES

When WIRSING made a passing reference on conditions found by Allied troops in German Concentration Camps, SCHELLENBERG replied:

I am fully aware of the significance of the Allied Propaganda.

WIRSING:

I am not talking about propaganda, I am talking about the facts.

SCHELLENBERG:

I had nothing whatever to do with the executive, but I would not be the least bit surprised if the competent people who always caused trouble, have perpetrated deeds which will be put to the discredit to the whole German people.

31) WIRSING RETURNS TO BAVARIA

As soon as SCHELLENBERG apprised him of the futility of further attempts to negotiate, WIRSING declared that he saw no sense in staying on in HOLSTEIN and that he would return to BAVARIA to his family and his few remaining belongings. SCHELLENBERG offered no objections.

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No offerred to arrange for a trip to SWEDEN if WIRSING cared to quit Germany. WIRSING declinod. WIRSING returned by plane to HEILBRUNN on 3 May 1945.

32) COULENT OF SS-STURMBANNFUEHRER DR. HOFFMANN, CHIEF REFERENT OF Amt VI, RSHA.

SCHLEICHENBERG'S DISMISSAL

WEISS G's assumption that SCHLEICHENBERG had been eliminated from the command of Amt VI is absolutely correct. This decision was made by KALTENBRUNNER himself, in the presence of MUECK, SCHORZENY and Dr. HOFFMANN, at a meeting in Hotel Orte Reichischer Hof at WIEN 1 around the 25 April.

DISMISSAL OF DR. HOFFMANN

In talks that took place around the 1st April in Alt Aussee KALTENBRUNNER had already proposed that Hoffmann should be publicly-crossed by SCHLEICHENBERG who had then met him for the first time with HOFFMANN on 25 April.

HOFFMANN

HOFFMANN, our attorney for Austria, money, incompatible with his own, merely knew it KALTENBRUNNER that SCHLEICHENBERG was in on the scene and probably with the same I should have known of the traits of KALTENBRUNNER's Austrian proclivities.

SCHLEICHENBERG'S CRITICAL ATTITUDE TO HOFFMANN AND BERGER

KALTENBRUNNER had the opinion that SCHLEICHENBERG advised HOFFMANN and himself on matters of Austria. He felt strongly in his belief after learning through the press of HOFFMANN's current negotiations with Count HERMADOTTE.

HILLER was in the spirit of "Klovin"; introduced Count HERMADOTTE to KALTENBRUNNER, was sure that HILLER and SCHLEICHENBERG would use this connection for their own personal interests.

HOFFMANN'S PLAN AGAINST SCHLEICHENBERG

HOFFMANN himself in parting ways with SCHLEICHENBERG was the result of the latter's lack of foresight where an Austrian solution was the only logical outcome.

KALTENBRUNNER very likely feared that SCHLEICHENBERG would pursue his own solution via certain Swiss connections which KALTENBRUNNER had received for his own use (see, e.g., DUEBEN).

HILLER'S SPECIAL POSITION DRAFTED FOR SCHLEICHENBERG

HILLER himself had then once taken up the cudgels in SCHLEICHENBERG's behalf and for that reason what he conceived to be disloyalty on the part of SCHLEICHENBERG incensed him even more.

SCHLEICHENBERG once remarked:

I can almost hear SCHLEICHENBERG, in his unctuous manner, draw HILLER's attention to the dangers inherent in my Austrian separation. At a skillfully chosen opportunity he will then bring HILLER's personality into the discussion.

THE OLD Amt VI BEYOND REPAIR

The cue was furnished by Dr MUHLMANN who had just returned from INNSBRUCK and who told KALTENBRUNNER in SALZBURG (25 April) that SANDERSON had caused Gauleiter HOFFER of TYROL to arrange for billets for the personnel of Amt VI. MUECK and SCHORZENY immediately hooked in, telling KALTENBRUNNER that there was absolutely no sense in trying to re-activate Amt VI, also in view of the circum-

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tance that, according to SKORZENY, all telephone communications had broken down. SKORZENY also mentioned that the hide-out of Amt VI in Burg LAUENSTEIN had been evacuated in a hurry with American tanks dangerously close and that most of the group chiefs had paid out their personnel, loaded themselves and their secretaries into cars and taken off. Amt VI was therefore a thing of the past.

REORGANIZATION DRAFT OF VI B AND VI C

Inasmuch as the old groups still existant were VI B ('WANCK-HOTEL) and VI C ('SCHWEITZ'), a re-organization appeared conceivable only on the basis of the Austrian commando type. In the field of intelligence, To HANTNERHOFER and his advisers it appeared the logical solution to create something similar to the old Amt VI with VI B and VI C as the foundation.

AUTOMATISCHE GRUPPE

WANCK, assisted by SKORZENY, immediately drafted an order putting into effect their proposals. HANTNERHOFER SIGNED. Besides giving an outline of the re-organization decided upon, the order directed HANTNERHOFER to liquidate the old Amt VI in accordance with directives issued by WANCK and SKORZENY for their respective sectors.

/s/ EDWARD L. KING
Major, Inf.
Commanding.

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